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Virginia

All 50 State Seals

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The Great Seal of Virginia



Roman mythology defines the unique Great Seal of Virginia. The obverse of the seal features the Roman goddess Virtus standing over a defeated opponent. Virtus is dressed in Amazonian garb, and holds a spear and a sheathed sword. She represents the virtues of heroism, righteousness, freedom, and valor. She stands in a classical victor's pose over a fallen tyrannical foe, whose crown lies on the ground. The state's motto "Sic Semper Tyrannis" ("Thus Always to Tyrants") appears at the lower edge. The seal was approved at Virginia's 1776

Constitutional Convention, and the principal designer is said to have been George Wythe. A committee composed of Wythe, George Mason, Robert Carter Nicholas, and Richard Henry Lee collaborated on the design. In 1930 another committee was charged with standardizing the seal's design because of all the variations that came into use over the years. What the committee approved was basically adopting the 1776 seal as the standard. In 1949, another standard was implemented, when Virginia's Art Commission defined the official color scheme for the seal.

State [Statute](#).

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Virginia State Seal



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Virginia Seals and Emblems



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Official State Seals & Emblems



The official state seal of Virginia is represented on the Virginia flag.



Virginia state bird is the cardinal.



Virginia state flower is a dogwood.

For further investigation of Virginia emblems, see <http://legis.state.va.us/CapitolClassroom/pdfs/Emblems.pdf> and <http://legis.state.va.us> look under the Capitol Classroom header at the top of the page.

- Beverage:** Milk
- Bird:** Cardinal
- Boat:** Chesapeake Bay Deadrise
- Dog:** Foxhound
- Fish:** Brook Trout
- Flag:** The flag of Virginia contains the state seal in a field of blue. It was first used in the 1830s but not officially adopted until 1930.
- Floral Emblem:** Dogwood
- Folk Dance:** Square Dancing
- Insect:** Tiger Swallowtail Butterfly

Seal: The great seal of Virginia is circular. In the center is a figure of Virtus, the goddess of virtue, dressed as a warrior. She holds a spear in her right hand, with its point held downward touching the earth. In her left hand is a sheathed sword pointing upward. Her left foot rests on the chest of the figure of tyranny, who is lying on the ground. Above the figure is the word "Virginia," and under the figures is the state motto "Sic Semper Tyrannis" or "Thus Always to Tyrants." The seal, designed by George Wythe, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, was first adopted in 1776 and modified in 1930.

Shell: Oyster

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Washington

The Great Seal of Washington



The state of Washington has an official Great Seal that is simple in design, but entirely appropriate. The seal is basically just a circle with an outer ring reading "The Seal of the State of Washington 1889", and a center that contains a portrait of George Washington. The present seal uses a Gilbert Stuart painting for Washington's portrait. The state might not have such a simple design if it had not been for jeweler Charles Talcott, who was asked to engrave a much more elaborate design for the seal back in 1889. Talcott persuaded against a proposed scenic design of the port of Tacoma, Mt. Rainier, fields, and livestock. Instead, he sketched out a design using a postage stamp portrait of George Washington. The story is that the postage stamp image proved to be too poorly detailed to engrave, so Talcott instead used George's image from a crate of cough medicine. Several other images of George have appeared on Washington's Great Seal over the years, but the Gilbert Stuart portrait is the official image on the state's seal today.

State [Statute](#).

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The Symbols of Washington State

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Territorial Motto

UP "Al-ki" or "Alki"

Al-ki or Alki is an Indian word meaning "bye and bye." While not an "official" state symbol, this motto first appeared on the territorial seal designed by Lt. J.K. Duncan of Governor Steven's surveying expedition. On one side it pictures a log cabin and an immigrant wagon with a fir forest in the background; on the other side, a sheet of water being traversed by a steamer and sailing vessel, a city in perspective; the Goddess of Hope and an anchor is in the center. The figure is pointing at the significant word "Alki." According to Professor Edmond Meany, settlers from the schooner "Exact" first named their settlement on Alki Point *New York*. The new settlement was slower to grow than its East Coast counterpart however, so the name was changed to New York-Alki, meaning New York, by and by. It is spelled ALKI but many times people use the phonetic spelling Al-Ki to help pronounce it. It really means -- into the future -- that is the 1850s version of the term "bye and bye" or "I will see you bye and bye."



State Seal

UP In 1889, jeweler Charles Talcott designed our first state seal using an ink bottle, silver dollar and a postage stamp. Talcott's brother, L. Grant Talcott, lettered the words, "The Seal of the State of Washington, 1889," and another brother, G.N. Talcott, cut the printing die. A more detailed history can be found at the Secretary of State site on the [State Seal](#).



State Flower

UP **Coast Rhododendron**

In 1892, before they had the right to vote, Washington women selected the coast rhododendron as the state flower. They wanted an official flower to enter in a floral exhibit at the 1893 World's Fair in Chicago. Six flowers were considered, but the final decision was narrowed to clover and the "rhodie," and voting booths were set up for ladies throughout the state. When the ballots were counted, the rhododendron had been chosen as the Washington state flower.



State Nickname

UP **"The Evergreen State"**

On November 11, 1889, Washington became the 42nd state to enter the Union. It is the only state in the union that is named for a president. Washington was nicknamed "The Evergreen State" by C.T. Conover, pioneer Seattle realtor and historian, for its abundant evergreen forests. Unlike the other state symbols, the nickname has never been officially adopted by law.



State Flag

UP The state flag and the state seal are similar. Passed in 1923, Washington law describes the flag as having dark green bunting with a state seal in the center. In the late 1890s, a blue and gold military state flag with George Washington's profile on it flew over many cities and towns throughout the state. But, when it came to a final decision, the current flag was



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West Virginia

The Great Seal of West Virginia



The official seal of the state of West Virginia has remained unchanged since it was first adopted in 1863. Soon after West Virginia gained statehood, the state's first Legislature authorized artist Joseph H. Diss Debar's design for its official seal. The design captures the essence of West Virginia's natural resources and the resolve of its people. A large boulder sits in the center of the seal, symbolizing strength, steadfastness, and stability. Etched in the stone is the date of West Virginia's entrance into the Union, June 20, 1863. Two rifles

lie crossed in front of the boulder, and are draped with the Liberty Cap, signifying the state's willingness to defend itself in the name of Liberty. On one side of the boulder is a representation of Agriculture, as a farmer stands with his ax and plow before a cornstalk. On the other side, Industry is symbolized by a miner shouldering his pickaxe, and behind him an anvil and sledge hammer. These images are surrounded by the words "State of West Virginia", and the state's motto "Montani Semper Liberi", or "Mountaineers Always Free".

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State Seal of West Virginia



The Great Seal of West Virginia was adopted by the Legislature on September 26, 1863. The seal bears the legend, State of West Virginia, together with the motto, "Montani Semper Liberi" (Mountaineers Are Always Free) A farmer stands to the right and a miner to the left of a large rock bearing the date of admission to the Union, June 20, 1863. In front of the rock are two hunters' rifles with a Phrygerian Cap, or "Cap of Liberty", resting at the cross of the rifles.

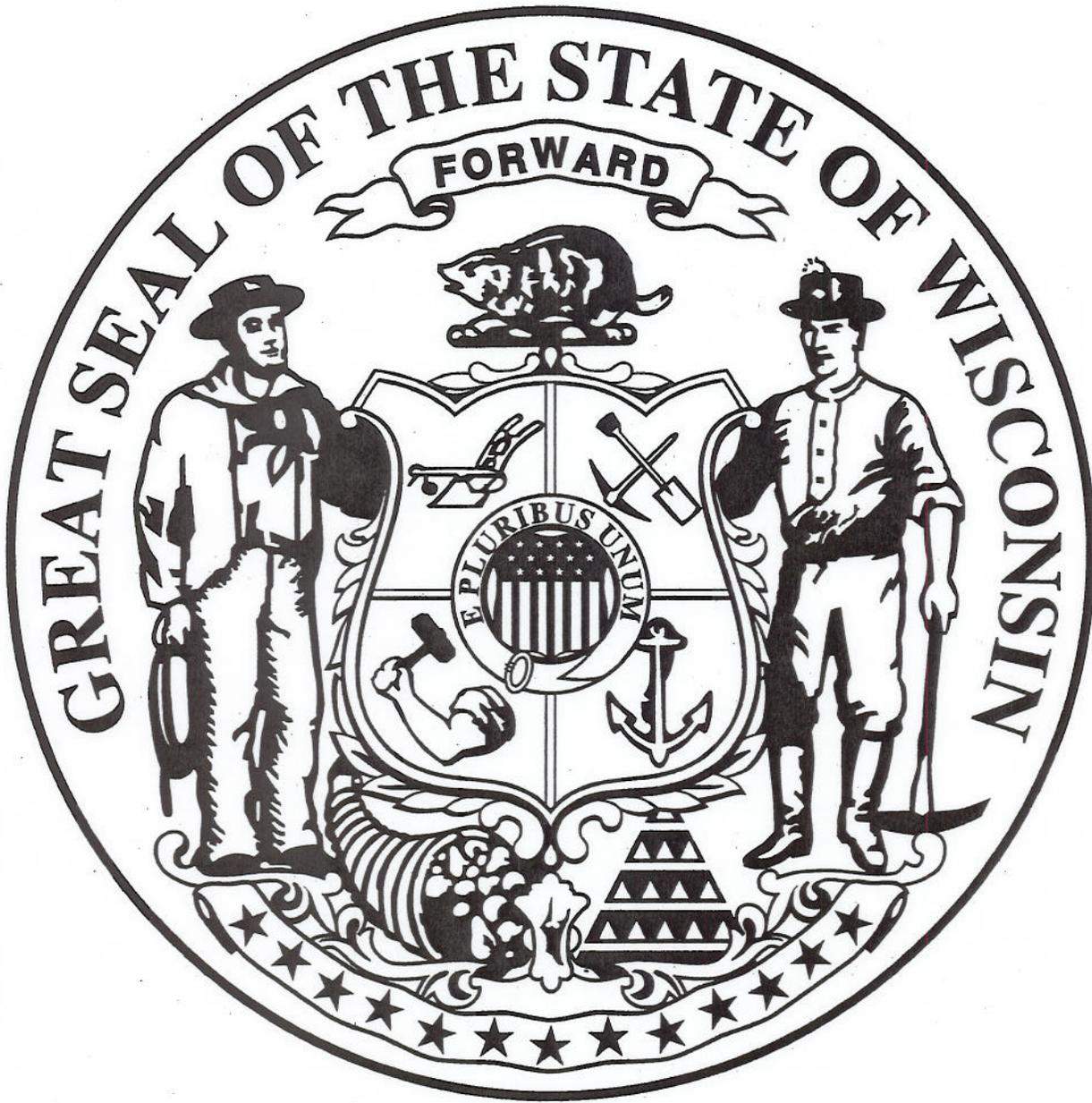
Joseph H. Diss Debar, of Doddridge County, designed the seal in 1863 at the request of the Legislature.

Old gold and blue were designated as the official state colors by Senate Concurrent Resolution 20 adopted by the Legislature on March 5, 1963.

June 20th - West Virginia Day

West Virginia Day became a legal state holiday by Chapter 59, Acts of the Legislature, Regular Session, 1927 (WVC p2-2-1)

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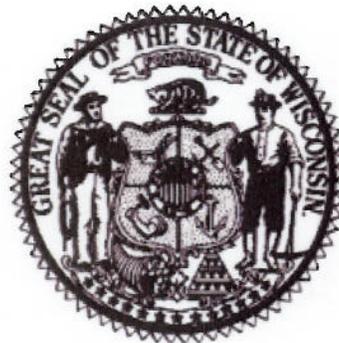


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Wisconsin

The Great Seal of Wisconsin



Wisconsin has seen a multitude of seals that have been used from territorial times through to the present. Even after Wisconsin gained statehood in 1848, one of the last territorial seals was still in use. In fact, the first state seal that Wisconsin used was simply the last territorial seal that had been modified to say "State of Wisconsin" rather than "Territory of Wisconsin", and carried the date of statehood, "May 29th, 1848", rather than the date on the territorial seal, "Fourth of July, 1836". The present

Great Seal began taking shape in 1851 as Governor Nelson Dewey, and Chief Justice of Wisconsin's Supreme Court, Edward Ryan, discussed designs that would be appropriate. What they came up with was a basic design for a coat of arms to be placed in the seal, surrounded by images and text representing the state. Although the details have changed with the years, Wisconsin's current seal adheres to their concept. The state's industry is depicted with images of a plow, a pick and shovel, an arm and hammer, and an anchor. Wisconsin's dedication to the Union is represented with a shield of thirteen vertical stripes and the U.S. motto "E Pluribus Unum". The state's resources are represented by a full cornucopia and a pyramid of pig lead. On either side of the shield are a sailor and a yeoman, symbolizing the marine and land-based labor force. Because Wisconsin is known as the "badger state", what could be more appropriate than the badger over the shield? The state's motto, "Forward", displays over these images, and under the words "Great Seal of the State of Wisconsin".

State [Statute](#).



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Wisconsin State Symbols



State Coat of Arms: Finalized in 1881, the Coat of Arms contains symbols that represent the diversity, wealth and abundance of resources in Wisconsin.

State Motto: "Forward" Reflecting Wisconsin's continuous drive to be a national leader, the state adopted "Forward" as the official state motto in 1851.



State Flag: Last altered in 1979, the state flag flutters in the breeze over Wisconsin representing the rich history of our great state.

State Song: "On Wisconsin!" The rhythmic and rousing beats of "On Wisconsin," already a popular football song since 1909, began filling the air as the official state song in 1959.



State Flower: Wood Violet (*Viola papilionacea*) Adopted as Wisconsin's official state flower on Arbor Day 1909, the wood violet's gentle green leaves and purple petals sway in the breeze reflecting Wisconsin's scenic beauty.

State Bird: Robin (*Turdus migratorius*) A welcome sign of the coming spring, the red-breasted robin won the hearts of school children across the state, who voted to name it the state bird in 1926-27.



State Tree: Sugar Maple (*Acer saccharum*) With its bright yellow fall colors, and its delectable spring harvest of sweet maple sugar, the sugar maple became the state's official tree in 1949.

State Fish: Muskellunge (*Esox masquinongy* Mitchell)



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Wyoming

The Great Seal of Wyoming



Wyoming gained statehood in 1890, and waited for its second Legislature to approve an official seal three years later. The most prominent feature of Wyoming's seal is the central figure of a woman standing before a banner which reads "Equal Rights".

Wyoming bears the honorable distinction of being at the forefront of states advocating equal rights for men and women, well before the turn of the century. On either side of the female figure are two pillars, each with scrolls that proclaim Wyoming's major economic strengths: oil, mines,

livestock, and grain. On each pillar are burning lamps, symbolizing the Light of Knowledge. In the foreground, a striped shield and star, topped by an eagle, represent Wyoming's sovereignty and dedication to the Union. The number 44 identifies Wyoming as the 44th state to enter the Union. On either side of the shield are the dates 1869 and 1890, which represent, respectively, the date that Wyoming organized as a Territory, and the date that Wyoming gained statehood. Flanking the pillars are figures representing the livestock and mining industries. The outer circle bears the words "Great Seal of the State of Wyoming".

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*Adopted by the Second Legislature in 1893
Revised by the Sixteenth Legislature in 1921*

The Secretary of State is the Custodian of the Great Seal. The signature of the Governor, the certifying signature of the Secretary of State and the impression of the Great Seal represent the authority and sovereignty of the State of Wyoming.

The two dates on the Great Seal, 1869 and 1890, commemorate the organization of the Territorial government and Wyoming's admission into the Union. The woman in the center holds a banner proclaiming "Equal Rights," Wyoming having been the first government to grant equal civil and political rights to women. The male figures typify the livestock and mining industries of the state. Upon a five-pointed star the number "44" appears, being the number of admission into the Union. On top of the pillars rest lamps from which burn the Light of Knowledge. Scrolls encircling the two pillars bear the words "Oil," "Mines," "Livestock" and "Grain," four of Wyoming's major industries.

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